

**MEETING OF THE
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
1100 MERCANTILE LANE, SUITE 115A
LARGO, MD 20774
MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2022**

PRESENT: Roberta B. Deegan, President, Republican Member
Beatrice P. Tignor, Vice President, Democratic Member
Harold Ruston, Republican Member
Thomas J. Slezak, Republican Member
Jaime J. Vazquez-Saldana, Republican Member
Lucille Gaither, Alternate Republican Member
Clement A. Gaynor, Jr., Alternate Republican Member
Terri I. Williams, Alternate Democratic Member
Anita C. Jones, Board Secretary
Alisha L. Alexander, Elections Administrator
Daneen Banks, Deputy Elections Administrator

ABSENT: Robert G. McGinley, Board Counsel

This meeting was conducted using the "Go To Meeting" platform. Ms. Deegan called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and a quorum was present. Ms. Deegan requested that guests identify themselves and then mute their location to reduce background interference/noise. Ms. Janet Llewelyn identified herself.

MINUTES

Ms. Deegan requested clarifications to the minutes for February 15, 2022 (Page 2, 5th bullet "Mail-In Ballot Applications" should be amended to indicate that the voter has the option of being on a permanent list or selecting the upcoming election; and Page 3, line seven "Election Act", delete the word requested). A motion was made by Mr. Vazquez-Saldana, seconded by Mr. Gaynor, and duly passed approving the minutes with the amendments noted.

Ms. Deegan requested clarifications to the minutes for January 6, 2022 (Primary Election) and February 3, 2022 (General Election) (Page 3, "Overview of Canvass Process", Line 2, change COVID-19 pandemic to COVID-19 mandate). A motion was made by Ms. Tignor, seconded by Mr. Gaynor, and duly passed to accept the minutes for January 6, 2022, January 12, 2022, January 14, 2022, February 3, 2022, February 9, 2022, and February 11, 2022, with the amendments noted.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Correspondence – None.

Gubernatorial Election

- Congressional and Legislative Redistricting Plans. These plans are being challenged in court and have Statewide implications.

- County Council Redistricting Plans. These plans were challenged in court. The Court of Appeals denied the challenge and the original plans developed by the Redistricting Commission will prevail.
- Board of Education Redistricting Plans. HB1473 (Altering the boundaries of the school board districts for election of the members of the Prince George's County Board of Education) has been introduced as emergency legislation.
- These delays really restrict our ability to implement the changes and prepare maps, increasing the workload on staff. The adjustments are manually coded in the system.
- We will continually review our election plans and adjust, as needed, to meet these challenges.
- Staff have conducted a cursory review of the maps and the Congressional, Legislative, and County Council overlays and have identified 57 precinct splits. There may be additional splits. Staff will need to find new precinct locations and/or evaluate current locations that could service more than one precinct.
- The Maryland Association of Election Officials (MAEO) has publicly expressed their concerns with the redistricting delays and suggested utilizing vote centers and possibly changing the date of the Primary Election.
- The State Board of Elections (SBOE) sent ballot applications to Democratic and Republican registered voters in Maryland. To date, 18,629 applications have been processed and we have 15,207 more to complete. Trays of applications are delivered daily. This program has increased staff workload and BOE faces challenges finding temporary staff to process these applications.
- Staff will work evenings and weekends to complete these tasks.

Election Judges – BOE recruited 4,579 Election Judges (Democratic - 3,802; Republican – 376; and Unaffiliated/Other – 401). Staff sent letters to newly registered voters (Republican, Unaffiliated, Other) to recruit more judges, and we are receiving some responses. Also, recruitment efforts will be continued throughout the election cycle since a high drop off is anticipated.

2022 Maryland Legislative Session – A list of all election-related bills was included in the Board packet last month. Ms. Alexander reported that most bills were still in committee, no significant activity. MAEO does not take positions on legislation; however, they will provide fiscal notes and technical explanations.

Election Equipment – BOE is expecting new e-poll book printers for the 2022 election cycle. In addition, the State Board of Public Works approved funding for new e-poll books. We expect that the new e-poll books will be available for the 2024 election cycle. The current equipment has exceeded the life cycles and needs replacement.

Audits and Investigations (A&I) – Ms. Alexander reported that the BOE's annual meeting with A&I is scheduled on March 28, 2022. It is anticipated that there will be questions concerning expenditures that were not budgeted (i.e., drop boxes, security, etc. – items mandated by the General Assembly after the fiscal year budget was approved). Justification will be provided.

Voter Registrations – The Maryland Voter Registration System is updated based on information received from the registrants, ERIC (Electronic Registration Information Center), MVA (Motor Vehicle Administration, NCOA (National Change of address), and other reports. BOE staff will continue to update the Voter Registration Statistical Report as data is received. The February 2022 report will be forwarded to the Board once it is complete.

Ms. Deegan asked about new categories on the report. Ms. Alexander advised that one was added to identify voters that were sent letters because their address appeared to be a commercial location and another category identified voter registrations conducted virtually by volunteers.

Space Requirements – Ms. Alexander reported on the BOE space needs, particularly warehousing. The Office of Central Services (OCS) is working on this issue. Suite 107 of our existing building is available, and OCS is negotiating with the landlord. In the interim, staff is looking at 30-foot storage trailers to assist. This is a very frustrating situation for staff.

Ethics and Financial Disclosure – Ms. Alexander advised Board Members that they should receive an e-mail notice from the State Ethics Commission and that their statements are due by April 30, 2022. The County's Financial Disclosure Office requires notice also.

OLD BUSINESS

- Ms. Deegan noted she still has the correspondence from Lee Havis, Better Prince George's County group, and has not responded to it.
- Ms. Alexander forwarded Mr. Slezak's request for the SBOE to look at revising the language on the Voter Confirmation card. She has not heard from the SBOE on this matter.

PERSONNEL – The Election Operations Manager (Citizen Services Specialist) position was advertised, and nine applications were received. Interviews will be conducted as soon as possible. This is a low number and indicative of the issues we face with finding candidates. Any help identifying candidates for temporary positions would be appreciated.

LEGAL – Mr. McGinley will provide us with an update at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS – Ms. Alexander reported that the modem issue does not currently apply to the State of Maryland. In 2016, the equipment was sold with modems; however, the SBOE required ES&S to remove them. BOE and the SBOE staff oversaw the process. The modems were not certified by the U.S. Elections Assistance Commission (EAC) and could not be used. As part of their acceptance protocol, BOE staff completed the check lists and verified that the modems had been removed or removed them. In addition, no results were ever transmitted. Ms. Alexander will research the records to see if the documents/acceptance forms are still available. They may have exceeded the file retention schedule. She reiterated that we all are working to ensure fair elections that are secure and conducted with integrity.

Ms. Deegan noted that we want elections conducted as clean as possible.

Mr. Vazquez-Saldana expressed his concerns and reported that he believed this issue was cause for concern. Ms. Alexander noted that the voting units have been utilized during many election cycles and there haven't been any issues with audits and results. Mr. Vazquez-Saldana asked, "Did we look at the issue deeply enough, did we question the infrastructure? There are groups that are doing that."

Mr. Ruston noted that flaws can be found in any electronic device. He also stated that the 2020 election cycle conspiracy theories need to be put to rest. We can always go back to the paper ballot which is the original record."

Mr. Vazquez-Saldana made note of third-party comments from Mike Lindell and other groups; however, specific data was not available. Ms. Alexander asked why these groups don't contact the State Board of Elections. Mr. Vazquez-Saldana stated that they had but had not heard back so they were contacting local boards of elections. Ms. Alexander stated that no changes to the guidelines would ever be made at the local level.

Ms. Tignor advised that the Board needs to put Prince George's County first and stop worrying about the occurrences in other states.

On behalf of the Board, Ms. Alexander was asked to contact the SBOE and have them confirm that all the modems were removed statewide.

NEXT MEETING –The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 4, 2022, at 5:30 p.m.

Ms. Alexander asked that the Board check their schedules and be available for emergency meetings as necessary.

A motion was made by Mr. Slezak, seconded by Mr. Vazquez-Saldana, and duly passed to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Roberta B. Deegan, President

Anita C. Jones, Recording Secretary

Date